

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAJ-01 OMB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4291

USIA WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: WEEKLY SAUDI EDITORIAL REVIEW

SUMMARY: SAUDI PRESS PAST WEEK (MARCH 31-APRIL 6) WAS DOMINATED BY STORIES ON LEBANESE DEVELOPMENTS, JORDAN'S KING HUSANY'S VISIT TO THE U.S., RESTRICTED U.S. AID TO ISRAEL (AS ATTRIBUTED TO U.S. AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL), THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE IN LONDON, TERMINATION OF EGYPTIAN MARINE FACILITIES TO SOVIET NAVY, U.S. ARMS SALES TO EGYPT AND DEVELOPMENTS IN ARGENTINE. U.S.-RELATED COMMENTARIES INVOLVED LEBANON, KING HUSAYN'S U.S. VISIT, THE U.S. VETO, ISRAELI A-BOMBS, U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, KING KHALID'S TOUR IN GULF STATES AND FREEDOM OF SAUDI PRESS. END SUMMARY.

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1. LEBANON:

3/30 ENGLISH DAILY ARAB NEWS REFERRING TO PROPOSALS FOR ARAB SYMBOLIC MILITARY INTERVENTION, SAID ARAB INTERVENTION IN LEBANON NO PANACEA TO THAT AILING ARAB COUNTRY.

3/30 AL-RIYAD ASKED WHETHER THOSE CALLING FOR USE OF FORCE TO SETTLE SITUATION ARE THEMSELVES CAPABLE OF DOING SO AND FAST? "AND IF THEY INTERVENED" THE WRITER WENT ON, "WOULD THAT MEAN THE RESULTS WOULD BE POSITIVE OR JUST THE BEGINNING OF THE AWAITED FIFTH ARAB-ISRAELI ROUND?" "ARAB COUNTRIES CANNOT SETTLE THIS SITUATION AND SOME OF THEM HAVE A HAND IN IT." THE PAPER CONCLUDED.

ON 4/3 SAME PAPER SAID THE LATEST TRUCE IN LEBANON COULD BE CONSIDERED AS A LAST CHANCE GIVEN BY SYRIA TO BOTH PARTIES IN LEBANON TO SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS, "BEFORE SHE WOULD IMPOSE A SOLUTION OF HER OWN."

2. KING HUSAYN'S VISIT:

REFERRING TO KING HUSAYN'S RECENT STATEMENT THAT U.S. HOLD KEY TO SOLUTION OF MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM, THE WRITER MURAQIB OF 3/30 AL-BILAD ASKED "WHY THEN DOESN'T THE KEY HOLDER UNLOCK DOORS TO PEACE."

3/30 ARAB NEWS SAID NOW THAT PRESIDENT FORD WAS EVENTUALLY FORCED TO ABANDON VISIT TO M.E. IN APRIL MEANS THAT THE M.E. QUESTION CONTINUES TO DEFY SETTLEMENT THROUGH POLITICAL REMANTICISM, AND STILL NEEDS A MORE PRAGMATIC APPROACH. WASHINGTON THEREFORE INTERESTED IN RECEIVING AS MANY M.E. LEADERS AS POSSIBLE (E.G. HUSAYN), IF ONLY TO GIVE IMPRESSION MOMENTUM IS NOT LOST.

3. U.S. VETO:

3/30 AL-JAZIRA ASKED: "IS IT A DOUBLE-FACED POLICY THAT U.S. SAYS SHE IS AGAINST ISRAELI OCCUPATION OF ARAB
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LAND BY FORCE AND THEN TO USE VETO IN SECURITY COUNCIL TO KILL A MAJORITY RESOLUTION DENOUNCING ISRAELI OPPRESSIVE ACTS AGAINST THE ARABS."?

4/2 AL-YAMAMAH SAID. "THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT US STANDS ON M.E. ARE GOVERNED ONLY THE BE DESIRE TO APPEASE THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT AND KEEP HER HAPPY."

UNDER "EVENHANDEDNESS, FELLOW," DR. ABDULLAH BIN NASIR AL-WIHAYBI, (APPARENTLY A PROFESSOR) SAID IN

4/2 AL-YAMAMAH MAGAZINE SECTION: "WE WOULD LIKE PRESIDENT FORD AND HIS ADMINISTRATION TO KEEP THE M.E. AFFAIRS OUT OF ELECTORAL AUCTIONS, AND TO OPT FOR EITHER FRIENDSHIP WITH THE ARABS OR ONE-SIDEDNESS WITH ISRAEL."

4. ISRAEL'S A-BOMBS:

COMMENTING ON PRESS REPORTS IN THE NEW YORK TIMES AND OTHER U.S. PAPERS OF ISRAEL'S ACQUISITION OF ATOMIC BOMBS, 4/6 ARAB NEWS SAID THAT IF THE U.S. PRESS CAN SOUND SO SURE ON THIS QUESTION, QUOTING FOR THEIR SOURCE U.S. OFFICIAL INFORMATION GATHERING AGENCIES, IS IT NOT SENSIBLE FOR THE ARABS TO PUT A QUESTION OR TWO TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ON THE MATTER"? THE WRITER CONCLUDED THAT SINCE THE U.S. IS THE PARTY THAT HAS A LEVERAGE ON ISRAEL, "THERE IS NO REASON WHY THE U.S. SHOULD BE UNABLE TO TWIST ISRAEL'S ARM LONG ENOUGH UNTIL TEL AVIV BECOMES AMENABLE TO THE IDEA OF AN INTERNATIONAL INQUIRY INTO ITS HUSH NUCLEAR ACTIVITIES. THIS MUST TAKE PRIORITY OVER THE STEP-BY-STEP DIPLOMACY OR ANY OTHER INITIATIVE TO REESTABLISH PEACE IN THE M.E.

5. KING KHALID'S TOUR:

SAUDI PAPERS CONTINUED HARPING ON GULF STATES' UNITY. 4/2 AL-YAMAMAH ENJOINS THE "ARAB EMIRATES", AS HISTORICAL NECESSITY, TO UNITE INTO ONE SINGLE POWERFUL NATION.

3/31 AL-BILAD'S MURAQIB SAID THAT THOUGH THE GULF
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STATES WERE ENDOWED WITH ABUNDANCE WHICH IS LIKELY TO CASUE OVER-CONFIDENCE AND VANITY, THE GULF LEADERS STILL REALIZE--AND THEY HAVE ALREADY SOMEHOW INDICATED THIS TO KING KHALID--THAT "UNLESS THEY WER UNITED UNDER HIS BANNER, THEY SHALL REMAIN SMALL STATES THAT FOREIGN POWERS WILL EYE WITH GREED." THE WRITER ARGUED "INDEED, HOW COULD THEY OVERLOOK THIS FACT WHEN THE THREATS TO INVADE THE AREA STILL REVERBERATE IN THE EARS?"

6. FREEDOM OF SAUDI PRESS:

SAUDI MINISTER OF INFORMATION DR. MOHAMMAD ABDO YAMANI HAS GIVEN A STATEMENT ON 4/1 ON FREEDOM OF PRESS IN SAUDI ARABIA. HE SAID THAT JOURNALISM IS ACTUALLY AN EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENT, AND THAT FREEDOM OF PRESS IS BEING LEFT AS A TRUST IN HANDS OF SAUDI PRESS PEOPLE, WHO ARE EXPECTED TO CARRY OUT THEIR DUTIES

RESPONSIBLY.

COMMENTING ON DR. YAMANI'S REMARKS, MUHAMMAD ALI
HAFIZ CALLED IN 4/2 AL-MADINA FOR THE CREATION OF A
PRESS SYNDICATE TO BE CHARGED WITH FORGING A CHARTER
AND A CODE OF DISCIPLINE FOR SAUDI JOURNALISTS.
SABBAGH

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